



THE GREEN SCENE

El Parque Nuestro Opens New Park in “Park Poor” Community

Supervisor Gloria Molina and Director Russ Guiney were joined by local parents and more than 100 elementary school students on June 16, 2010 to dedicate El Parque Nuestro, a new, Green, fitness park in one of the County’s “park-poor” communities.



El Parque Nuestro offers passive recreation and outdoor fitness. The new Green park is the first in the County’s park system to use recycled materials for benches and tables. It also uses smart controller irrigation system, solar lighting and features porous concrete jogging paths. The park is also equipped with drought tolerant plants, play equipment, BBQ pits and fitness equipment.

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“El Parque Nuestro” means our park in Spanish and the name has a story behind it. Children from Lillian Elementary School were invited to enter a contest and submit a brief paragraph of what they thought the name should be. The name had to reflect the spirit and uniqueness of the new park and represent the community’s diversity. Eight-year-old Natalie Torres received a commendation from Supervisor Molina for naming the park and approximately 100 of her classmates were present to celebrate with her. Natalie wanted the park to be “everybody’s park” and “a place for all of her friends to have fun.”

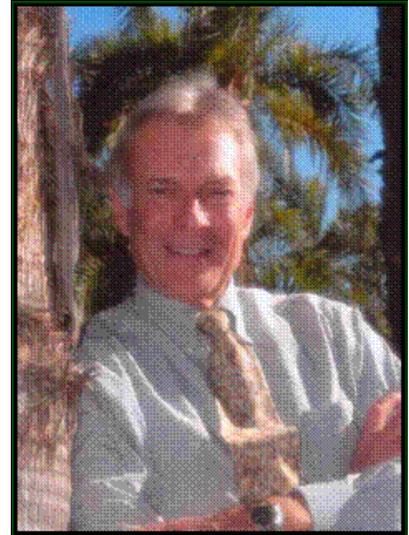


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Greetings from the Director

For many people, the summer months signal vacations, warmer weather and enjoying time outdoors. Feel your personal best this summer with the Countywide Fitness Challenge campaign, a collaboration among our Department, the Department of Human Resources, the Chief Executive Office and the Quality and Productivity Commission. You'll have many fun opportunities to participate in healthy activities, contests and events with your families and fellow co-workers to begin or continue your journey to a healthier and more active lifestyle. Featuring our very own Play for Life! campaign, the Countywide Fitness Challenge will offer different fun and healthy events, all of them outdoors, family-friendly and most of them at our parks. There's also a Biggest Loser component, where teams from different departments can participate together and work on losing weight in teams. There's nothing like having comrades and partners to help you achieve your goals. Be sure to read the emails and updates sent by our Department's Wellness Coordinator Jennifer Williams. She'll continue to give you information on how you can participate and develop the best you, yet!



Russ Guiney, Director

Whittier Narrows Hosts First Countywide Fitness Challenge Event

The first event of the Countywide Fitness Challenge took place on Saturday, June 26, 2010 at Whittier Narrows Park with more than 1,000 employees and their families in attendance. Deputy Director Hayden Sohm represented the Department and along with Human Resources Department Director Lisa Garret rallied the crowds. Whittier Narrows Superintendent Joyce Gibson and her staff, as well as recreational staff from the East Agency and Department Headquarters worked hard at the event.



A host of health screenings—including cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure and stroke tests—were available. Organized walks were held and all the major health care providers were present. Children were able to visit and check out a Los Angeles County Fire Truck, get their faces painted and create at an arts and crafts booth provided by our department. The Department of Parks and Recreation also hosted numerous hula hoop contests, a hit for all age groups!

The Department of Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, the Chief Executive Office and the Quality and Productivity Commission launched the Countywide Fitness Challenge—Featuring Play for Life! campaign earlier this month.



JANUARY SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

35 years of Service



Martin "Marty" Markham,
*Grounds Maintenance Worker II –
Deane Dana Friendship Park*

25 years of Service



Grace Perez, *Management Secretary III—Regional Facilities Agency*

35 years of Service (not present for photos)

Jose Padilla, *Grounds Maintenance Worker Regional Agency – Whittier Narrows Recreation Area*

Gregory Hamilton, *Crew Instructor – South Agency*

Alfred Flores, *Grounds Maintenance Worker I Regional Agency – Whittier Narrows Recreation Area*

20 years of Service (not present for photos)

Michael Downen, *Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Regional Agency*

A Special Tribute to a Beloved Employee

This year would have been the year that marked Keith Garrison's twenty years as a permanent employee with the Department of Parks and Recreation. Sadly, after a long fight with Lou Gehrig's disease, Keith passed away on February 24, 2010.

During his years of service in recreation, Keith positively impacted the lives of community members, especially youth, through effective recreational programming. He enriched the lives of both Parks staff and park patrons with his friendly and positive attitude. Keith was a one-of-a-kind person who was able to connect with people from all walks of life and make them feel comfortable.

In 2003, Keith made a successful transition from the field to the administrative office to work as a Grant Writer. In 2005, he was part of the grant-writing team that brought in over \$17.5 million in grants—an unprecedented amount—for capital improvements to our parks. The \$17.5 million also substantially offset the County budget for capital project needs, which otherwise would have required alternative funding sources.

Keith received numerous accolades for his work performance and excellent programs throughout his County career. Most recently, in 2006, Keith was the Department's Permanent Employee of the Year and he went on to be the County Employee of the Year.

Keith was dedicated and proud to work for Parks and Recreation. He always presented a professional image to the public and the Department. His dedication and pride was clearly evident through his excellent job performance and reliability. Keith's contributions and efforts have substantially impacted the lives of our constituents and our communities.

At the spring Section Head and Above meeting, Director Russ Guiney presented Keith Garrison's 20-year award to his girlfriend Eva Kwon, in honor of Keith's 20 dedicated years to Los Angeles County.



FEBRUARY SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

40 Years of Service



Bob Gonzales, *Regional Grounds Maintenance Supervisor — South Agency*

35 Years of Service



John "Jack" Farley, *Regional Park Superintendent I Regional Agency – Devil's Punchbowl*

30 Years of Service



Kaye Michelson, *Special Assistant to the Director — Executive Office*

30 Years of Service



John Wicker, *Chief Deputy Director — Executive Office*

Congratulations!

25 Years of Service



Juan Manuel Escobar, *Regional Operations Manager, East Agency*

25 Years of Service



Everlean Wright, *Grounds Maintenance Worker II, South Agency – Cerritos Park*

25 Years of Service



Anthony Guajardo, *Landscape Contract Monitor — Administrative Agency*

MARCH SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

25 Years of Service



Jesse Yee, *Administrative Services Manager II*

25 Years of Service



Linda Bello, *Senior Secretary III — Regional Park and Open Space District*

20 Years of Service



Sam Adams, *Departmental Facilities Planner I — South Agency*

Lake Lifeguards Take on the Baker to Vegas Public Safety Desert Relay Race!

The Los Angeles County Lake Lifeguards have provided more than 75 years of public service for the Department's three most popular lakes: Castaic Lake; Puddingstone Lake and Santa Fe Dam. County Lifeguards patrol over 40 miles of Southern California waters and while keeping swim beaches safe, enforcing water safety and boating laws, they still find time to come together as a team to participate in the sportsmanship of relay racing. The Los Angeles County Lake Lifeguards participated in the Baker to Vegas Public Safety Desert Relay Race, which was held on Saturday, April 19 through Sunday, April 20 and lasted 14 hours. The team placed ninth overall and third in their division in a field of 256 teams.

The Lifeguard team, supported solely by volunteers, was comprised of 20 runners and 10 support staff, made up of personnel from all three lake facilities. The team's final running time was 14 hours and 42 minutes and 42 seconds! Weather didn't deter the team, even with the daytime temperatures being the hottest since 1992, and reaching 104 degrees Fahrenheit by 1:30 p.m. that day! This is the only event that brings together all three lakes as a team to compete with other agencies. The team's fastest runner was Roger Castaneda, who averaged 6 minutes, 28 seconds per mile, on the steepest portion of the race!

Congratulations to all of the Department's Lake Lifeguards on a job well done. And thank you volunteers for supporting the team! We hope to see you compete again next year!



HIGH FIVE!

For Those Who Go Above and Beyond...

High Five to Agie Jordan, III !!!! Agie deserves a big High Five for being the Open Space District's point man in the negotiations for a system to replace our aging Grant Tracking System. Agie has been spending months on this critical project. First, he was involved in finding a vendor with a product that could replace our old FoxPro application. Now, he is representing the District in dealing with CIO, Auditor-Controller and ISD because the County is building a new system for us that will link directly to eCAPS. He takes on this extra responsibility with competence while maintaining a friendly demeanor with all.

Ruth Roess
Head, Administrative Section
Regional Park and Open Space District

The folks here are so impressed with your Department's Efficiency Initiative Report that we're creating a "Special Recognition" section on the [website](#) to highlight your efforts (already live). All Deputy CEOs are now aware of the great job Parks has done, and an e-mail from Bill to all department heads is coming soon. Thanks again for inviting me to the Parks Summit, and treating the Efficiency Initiative as a priority project.

Frank Cheng
Chief Executive Office

Congratulations! The Department of Parks and Recreation is one of four winning departments in the County's 2010 food drive for Cesar Chavez Community Service Week. Thank you for your contribution to the success of the 2010 Cesar Chavez Food Drive. The Food Bank reports a total collection of 17,230 pounds of food and personal care items from participating County worksites. Congratulations, again, on being one of the top, four County departments this year.

Victoria Pipkin-Lane
Director
Office of Workplace Programs

Thank you to all of the coaches, director Tim Smith, and everyone who made it possible for my children to have golf lessons. The kids were inspired and encouraged by you.

Jill Meadows
and family
Granada Hills

GIVE Someone a HIGH FIVE!

Do you know someone in our Department who deserves special recognition? Maybe you were on a tight deadline and that person helped you meet it. Maybe you were having a tough work day and that person helped you beat it. You know who those people are, the ones who go above and beyond. Help us recognize them. Email their name and a short paragraph of why they deserve a High Five! to iperius@parks.lacounty.gov and we'll do our best to include them in the High Five! column of The Green Scene.



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